Technology revolution 12854

History, Revolution

The technology revolution is upon us. In recent years there have been many triumphs in technology. Now more than ever, people are able to communicate over thousands of miles with the greatest of ease. Wireless communication is much to thank for the ease of communication. What used to take weeks threw mail, now takes seconds over the Internet. But just like any revolution there are social consequences, especially when the revolution takes place around the globe. Since the world does not evolve at the same pace, lesser developed countries as well as minorities in developed countries have not even come close to reaping the benefits of a world connected at the touch of a button. The social argument is that as this revolution proceeds, the gap between the haves and have-nots will widen to the point of ill repute. Others argue that because of technological

advances the world is a much better place. This seems to be the debate at hand.

The problem domestically is that providing high-speed Internet services to rural

communities is difficult. Tom Daschle, a senator from Senator from South Dakota

highlighted the “ digital divide” between those who have access to high-speed

Internet services and those who live in undeserved areas where such capabilities

may not be readily available. The reason that this so critical to Senator

Daschle is because those without access to high-speed Internet services could be

cut off from affordable information on education and healthcare. The major issue

domestically is the distance problem. Rural areas are so far from the more

technologically advanced urban areas that getting high-speed phone connections

to these rural areas is difficult. To help remedy this problem many phone

companies are trying to enter the long-distance market. By doing this, it will

enable telephone companies to make greater investments in rural areas at a lower

more affordable cost. Another option to connect this distant areas is the

exploiting of wireless technology. Wireless technology can be a way around the

distance problem posed by offering these rural communities Internet access over

traditional landlines. John Stanton of western Wireless says, ” Economically,

wireless is a better way of providing universal service.” There is also

another problem with Internet access on the domestic front. This problem is that

of race. According to a new Federal survey, African-Americans and Hispanics are

less than half as likely as whites to explore the Internet from home, work or

school. This study also reinforces the fear that minority groups are

increasingly at a disadvantage in competing for entry-level jobs because most of

these jobs now require a knowledge of computers and comfort in navigating the

Internet. Donna L. Hoffman, a professor at Vanderbilt University says, “ The big question is why African-Americans are not adopting this technology, its not just price, because they are buying cable and satellite systems in large numbers. So we have to look deeper to cultural and social factors. I think there is still a question of ‘ What’s in it for me?’” Most division in computer use correlates to income levels and education. Sixty-one percent of whites and 54 percent of blacks in households earning more than $75, 000 used the internet regularly, but the figures drop to 17 percent of whites and 8 percent of blacks when families are earning $15, 000 to $35, 000. It has become obvious that race and socio-economic standing has something to do with the involvement in this technological revolution. Internationally is where the largest problems lie. In many corners of the world, there are dozens of developing countries where

widespread access to the Internet remains a distant possibility. While some of

the world’s most remote places have the internet, there are still no

connections in Iraq, North Korea and a handful of African countries. In many of

the developing countries with internet access, the access is basically

concentrated in the largest cities and is prohibitively expensive when set

against an individual’s income. In order to shorten the gap of technology

between developed and lesser-developed countries, especially in the realm of the

internet, there is an annual conference called INET. The purpose of this

conference is to educate those who are not as technologically advanced and

sending participants home with additional technical and administrative skills

for running networks. Poor and expensive telecommunications play a large part in

the reason why these third world countries are lacking Internet access, but

another major factor is politics. In countries such as Laos, the communist

government considers the internet a destabilizing force because of the free flow

of information associated with the Web. Basically old hardware, a weak telecommunications infrastructure and in some cases local political opposition have rendered the promised benefits of technology elusive. In the developed world, the Internet has ushered in the greatest period of wealth creation in history. It has undermined traditional power structures and changed the way industry conducts business. For many developing agencies, the was no reason to think technology could not have a similar affect on third world countries. But reality has not lived up to expectations. The real question is has the Internet been an effective tool in helping these lesser-developed countries? The United Nations thinks it can use the internet to help these countries. The United Nations has teamed up with Cisco Systems, Inc. in order to help the world’s poor. They are attempting to help by televising a concert called Netaid, which will be seen, around the world. Contrary to popular belief this will not just be another charity telethon. The heart of Netaid is the web site that is being

created to allow people around the world to participate in antipoverty efforts long after the music is over. The Web sites intent is to get groups from developed countries to contact and assist groups in these lesser-developed countries. This could possibly be a solution to bringing the Internet into the homes and lives of the entire world.

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